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FIRST PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM III)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 976 (1995) of 8 February 1995, in which the Council requested me to inform it monthly of progress in the deployment of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) and in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol (S/1994/1441, annex), including the maintenance of an effective cease-fire, free access by UNAVEM III to all areas of Angola, the free flow of humanitarian assistance throughout Angola and compliance by both the Government of Angola and by the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) with their obligations under the Lusaka Protocol.

II. POLITICAL SITUATION

2. The decision of the Security Council to establish UNAVEM III was an important milestone in the settlement of the Angola crisis. It has bolstered the hopes of the Angolan people for genuine peace and national reconciliation.

3. During the period under review, my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, continued his efforts to facilitate the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol. Following the adoption of resolution 976 (1995), he held extensive consultations with senior officials of the Government and of UNITA. He met, in particular, with Mr. Jonas Savimbi, President of UNITA, and later in Luanda with Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, President of Angola.

4. At the meeting with Mr. Savimbi, my Special Representative underscored the need for the parties to implement strictly the cease-fire and the specific commitments made by UNITA in the framework of the Lusaka Protocol. The resolutions of the eighth Extraordinary Congress of UNITA, held at Bailundo from 7 to 11 February 1995, were also discussed. It will be recalled, in this connection, that the UNITA Congress approved, inter alia, the Lusaka Protocol and expressed support for the proposed meeting between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi, the importance of which was stressed by the Security Council in its resolution 976 (1995). My Special Representative also discussed with

Mr. Savimbi those resolutions of the UNITA Congress which have raised concerns within the international community and have been found objectionable by the Government of Angola.

5. Mr. Savimbi assured Mr. Beye of his readiness to participate in the proposed meeting and to begin discussions with the Government on the practical modalities for it with the participation of UNAVEM. Moreover, the UNITA leader agreed to consider, in the context of the political consultations between the two parties, or at the meeting with President dos Santos, the question of the incorporation of UNITA members into the Government. An understanding was also reached that the issue of mercenaries and the early release of prisoners would be considered by the Joint Commission established in pursuance of the Lusaka Protocol.

6. My Special Representative also discussed with President dos Santos the resolutions of the UNITA Congress concerning the participation of UNITA members in the management of the affairs of State. During those exchanges, the President confirmed his readiness to meet with Mr. Savimbi. I therefore hope that both sides will now move expeditiously to organize and hold this meeting, so as to signal to the Angolan people and the international community that the process of national reconciliation has effectively begun.

7. During the period under review, my Special Representative continued to chair the Joint Commission, the principal body in charge of the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, in which the two parties and the three observer countries (the United States of America, Portugal and the Russian Federation) participate. Since the signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994, the Commission has held 10 regular and 3 extraordinary sessions. The third extraordinary session of the Joint Commission, held on 20 February 1995, dealt with the incident on 13 February in which a United Nations helicopter was shot at by UNITA in Quibaxe, Cuanza Sul province. The Commission noted that UNITA had recognized its responsibility for the incident and that it had promised to avoid such incidents in the future.

8. Despite some progress in carrying out various aspects of the Lusaka agreements, the situation continues to be tense in several parts of the country. This situation has been exacerbated by the widely publicized assertions made recently by Colonel "Zavarra", a UNITA defector, who claimed that, despite statements in support of the Lusaka process, his leadership was preparing for a major military offensive. Subsequently, in a press communiqué issued on 26 February, the Forças Armadas Angolanas (FAA) accused UNITA of non-compliance with th cease-fire and strongly warned it that it might respond to what it considered as provocations by UNITA. My Special Representative is trying to convince both sides to desist from such public exchanges.

III. MILITARY SITUATION

9. During the period under review, the cease-fire in Angola continued in general to hold. In many areas, tensions decreased markedly, and UNAVEM III consolidated its contacts at various levels with FAA and UNITA military forces. However, difficulties persist in carrying out liaison with UNITA in several

parts of the country. In addition, technical problems have been encountered in establishing effective triangular communications between UNAVEM and the two parties.

10. After a period of relatively low-level cease-fire violations, tensions have escalated somewhat in the last two weeks, in particular in the northern region. Formal complaints of cease-fire violations were received from both the Government and UNITA, but not all of the reported cases could be verified and confirmed by the United Nations. Many complaints included alleged UNITA attacks on villages, ambushes, looting, abduction of civilians, mine-laying and other violations. On the Government side, some unauthorized movements of troops and military air activity have recently been reported.

11. Progress has been achieved in the disengagement of troops in the central region of the country. However, the agreements reached in this regard in Chipipa and Waku Kungo by the Government and UNITA Chiefs of Staff concerning the areas of Uige and Negage have proved extremely difficult to implement. Despite several visits to the area by the Force Commander of UNAVEM, the disengagement of UNITA troops has been frustratingly slow.

12. UNAVEM III has continued to expand in accordance with the previous resolutions of the Security Council. As at 1 March, 418 United Nations military and police observers had been deployed to 38 sites outside Luanda. Approximately 40 additional military and police observers were expected to arrive in Luanda shortly. UNAVEM deployment to the countryside has been slowed down by recent incidents of shooting at UNAVEM aircraft by UNITA (in particular in Quibaxe on 13 February and in Licua on 18 February), lack of security clearances to visit certain areas and restrictions on freedom of movement, in particular by UNITA, but in recent days also by the FAA. In some regions, UNITA requested 48 hours' notice before any movement of United Nations flights and convoys. In general, United Nations access to UNITA-controlled areas has been limited.

13. The issues raised in paragraphs 9 to 12 above are being addressed through the Joint Commission. At the tenth session of the Commission, held on 1 March, UNITA agreed to issue orders to all its personnel to avoid incidents. To that effect it promised to use various channels of communication, including its radio, Vorgan, and to facilitate the necessary liaison procedures. In order to expedite the resolution of those issues, the Joint Commission established an ad hoc military working group. In another positive development, UNITA confirmed to my Special Representative that, as at 2 March, it would commence disengagement in the areas where it had not yet done so, in particular in Uige and Negage, and that it would ensure the safety of United Nations flights. UNITA also pledged to cooperate in the full integration of its troops into the national army.

14. The United Nations Secretariat and my Special Representative are pursuing with the Government of Angola, including at the highest levels, several pressing issues in connection with its contribution to UNAVEM III, in particular the provision of critical services and access to key Angolan facilities (airports, ports, storage, working premises, etc.). The Angolan authorities have made available to UNAVEM some accommodation, as well as air and vehicular transport.

In the absence of the provision of further facilities on an urgent basis, it will become extremely difficult, if not impossible, to deploy UNAVEM III within the demanding time-frame stipulated in my report of 1 February (S/1995/97 and Add.1 and Corr.1). Similarly, it is very important for the parties to start de-mining activities without delay.

15. Although preparations for the deployment of United Nations formed units are proceeding, I wish to draw the attention of the Government of Angola and UNITA to the decision of the Security Council in its resolution 976 (1995) that the deployment of infantry units will take place on the basis of a report from the Secretary-General to the Council that the conditions contained in paragraph 32 of my report of 1 February have been met, and provided the Council does not decide otherwise. In the meantime, the Secretariat has asked the troop-contributing countries to keep their personnel on stand-by for early deployment; it has also conducted in-depth briefings for them and continued logistic preparations for the arrival of the main body of UNAVEM III. Some participating Member States have begun reconnaissance for the deployment of their respective units.

16. A draft agreement between the Government of Angola and the United Nations on the status of forces has been prepared by the Secretariat and is being transmitted to the Government of Angola for its urgent consideration.

17. I would like to express my appreciation to the Member States that have agreed to contribute to this important peace-keeping operation and are preparing formed units for deployment. In many instances, those preparations are proceeding on schedule, and advance parties are expected to arrive in March/April. However, unless troop-contributing countries take certain required steps, including the urgent provision to the Secretariat of load lists for their units and of a clear indication of departure dates, the timetable for deployment could be affected.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

18. Over the past two months, United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations have stepped up their efforts to assess the humanitarian needs in newly accessible areas of Angola and to extend the geographic reach of their assistance programmes. Inter-agency teams visited localities in the provinces of Benguela, Bié, Huambo, Huila, Kwando Kubango, Kwanza Norte, Malange, Uige and Zaire to examine food, health and other needs. My Special Representative also visited the towns of Uige, Jamba and Ondjiva to verify the humanitarian situation there. These assessments have brought to light major health and nutrition problems in many areas of the country. At the same time, heavy rains have led to an increase in the incidence of cholera and diarrhoea in a number of towns, including the overpopulated city of Luanda. The prompt intervention of non-governmental organizations, supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), made it possible to control these localized epidemics.

19. In spite of some spontaneous movement of populations, especially in the provinces of Bengo, Benguela, Kwanza Norte and Moxico, it is expected that most

of the internally displaced persons will wait until the April harvest before returning to their areas of origin. The combined threat of mines and banditry continue to hinder the free movement of persons throughout the country. While WFP is committed to a heavier reliance on road transport, overland deliveries are still impeded by conflict and war-damaged infrastructure. However, humanitarian organizations are making steady progress in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of road infrastructures.

20. The mine-awareness campaign is continuing throughout the country. Close collaboration between non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies has permitted the widest possible dissemination of information to communities at risk. The Central Mine Action Office of the United Nations Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UCAH), together with UNAVEM, has established a Mine Action Working Group with the close participation of the competent non-governmental organizations. Among the main priorities is the conduct of a thorough mine survey in order to identify which areas require urgent action. On the basis of these results, strategic mine clearance will be undertaken to improve the logistics of humanitarian operations. International non-governmental organizations are in the process of training Angolan instructors and technicians in such towns as Kuito and Luena, where a number of mine-clearance operations have already begun.

21. Together with UNAVEM, the Demobilization and Reintegration Office of UCAH has set up a committee on quartering areas to establish criteria for site selection, infrastructure and the provision of services such as health care, water and sanitation as well as all related infrastructure. The Demobilization and Reintegration Office is also designing a data-processing system to facilitate humanitarian assistance in the quartering areas and sponsoring a study on strategies for the effective reintegration of soldiers into civilian life. The Humanitarian Coordination Group, which includes representatives of the Government, UNITA and UCAH, with the participation of other United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has met eight times since its establishment in January in order to examine the humanitarian situation in Angola and to define priorities.

22. The 1995 United Nations Inter-agency Appeal for Angola was presented to the donor community at a meeting held at Geneva on 23 February under the chairmanship of my Special Representative. During the meeting, several donor countries made explicit pledges amounting to $71 million, while others expressed their intention to make substantial contributions at a later stage. I hope that these countries will make good on their pledges as soon as possible in order to enable the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to implement life-saving programmes in Angola and to lay the foundations for rehabilitation projects towards the end of 1995.

V. OBSERVATIONS

23. As the present report shows, although some progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, many difficulties still have to be resolved, and it is essential that more concrete signs of cooperation and goodwill be provided by both parties, especially in this initial phase of the

resumed peace process. The decision of the Security Council to establish UNAVEM III was an act of faith by the international community in the determination of the Angolan parties to put an end to the civil war that has ravaged their country and to embark resolutely on the path of peace and national reconciliation. However, the history of the Angolan conflict and the lessons learned from other recent peace-keeping operations have led the Security Council to adopt a new approach and to agree to my proposal to link the actual deployment of the bulk of UNAVEM III to the prior implementation by the parties of certain specific commitments made by them under the Lusaka Protocol.

24. As stated in paragraph 32 of my report of 1 February (S/1995/97 and Add.1 and Corr.1), it would be difficult to justify the deployment of infantry units unless the following essential initial tasks have been implemented: an effective cease-fire; the full disengagement of Government and UNITA forces; the setting up of verification mechanisms; the establishment of reliable communication links between the Government, UNITA and UNAVEM; the provision to, and verification by, UNAVEM of all relevant military data, including troop itineraries; the designation of all quartering areas; the withdrawal of troops to the nearest barracks; and the early start of de-mining activities. Evidently, these steps require free and unhindered access by UNAVEM to all areas of the country. It is also important that a realistic and practicable arrangement on the modalities for integration of UNITA troops into the national army of Angola be reached without further delay. Moreover, the agreed meeting between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi should take place in the near future, so as to provide a much needed momentum to the peace process.

25. Under the timetable approved by the Security Council, the deployment of the infantry units of UNAVEM III is scheduled to begin on 9 May 1995. In view of inescapable logistic constraints, this can be achieved only if I am in a position to notify the Security Council by 25 March, at the latest, that the parties have substantially complied with the conditions set forth in paragraph 4 of resolution 976 (1995). I therefore most strongly urge the Government of Angola and UNITA to take, before that date, the concrete actions without which I will have no choice but to advise the Security Council that the deployment of infantry units must be deferred. At a time when the extensive involvement of the United Nations in numerous other complex conflict situations is seriously taxing its limited resources, parties who request the assistance of the Organization must also be prepared to help the international community to help them.

26. In the meantime, the coming into effect of the cease-fire and the ensuing improvement of security conditions in the country have encouraged the movement of populations and economic activity, thereby decreasing the overall reliance on humanitarian aid. Displaced persons and other vulnerable populations, however, continue to require significant assistance, and land-mines remain a serious impediment to the movement of people and goods, as well as to the resumption of agricultural activity. The capacity of the humanitarian agencies to contend with these problems and to contribute to the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants depends on full and prompt funding by the donor community of the humanitarian programme set out in the 1995 Inter-agency Appeal for Angola.

Annex

UNAVEM III military and civilian police personnel

(as at 1 March 1995)

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Military medical personnel	Total
Algeria	10			10
Argentina	2	3		5
Bangladesh	10			10
Brazil	19	15	11	45
Bulgaria	10			10
Congo	7			7
Egypt	10			10
Guinea-Bissau	11	15		26
Hungary	10	15		25
India	19			19
Jordan	20	20		40
Malaysia	20	20		40
Morocco		2		2
Netherlands	14	9		23
New Zealand	3			3
Nigeria	20	15		35
Norway	4			4
Poland	7			7
Portugal	6			6
Russian Federation	10			10
Slovakia	5			5
Sweden	18			18
Uruguay	10			10
Zambia	10			10
Zimbabwe	21	17	—	38
Total	276	131	11	418